Constitutions

CONSTITUTIONS

OF THE

SOCIETY OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF CHARITY

OF

CALCUTTA

Marian Year

1954

BIBLIOTEKA REZIDENCIJE
D. I.
ZAGREB
PALMOTIĆEVA 33

Concordat cum originali.
H. ERIC BARBER,
Vic. Gen. Calcutta.

Imprimatur.
✠ ALB. V. D'SOUZA,
Archbishop of Calcutta.

CONSTITUTIONS

Of the Society of the Missionary Sisters of Charity of Calcutta

PART I.

		Page
Chapter I	Of the Aim, Name and Patron of the Society . .	5
Chapter II	Of the Members of the Society	6
Chapter III	Of the Religious Habit . .	9
Chapter IV	Of the Admission and Training of Candidates . . .	10
	(a) Of the Postulancy . .	13
	(b) Of the Noviciate . . .	15
Chapter V	Of Profession	18
Chapter VI	Of the Vow and Virtue of Poverty	20
Chapter VII	Of the Vow and Virtue of Chastity	25
Chapter VIII	Of the Vow and Virtue of Obedience	28
Chapter IX	Of the Vow of devoting oneself to work among the Poor	30
Chapter X	Of the Exercises of Piety . .	31
Chapter XI	Of the Practice of Virtue . .	34
Chapter XII	Of Going out, Visits, Journeys, Alms	36

		Page
Chapter XIII	Of Study and Work . . .	37
	(a) Education	39
	(b) Visiting the Sick . . .	39
	(c) The Dying	41
	(d) The Beggars	42
	(e) The Home for the Abandoned	43
	(f) The Village Work . . .	44
Chapter XIV	Of Health and Sickness-Duties towards the Deceased	46
Chapter XV	On leaving the Society and on Dismissal from it . .	48

PART II.

Chapter XVI	Of the highest Authority over the Congregation . .	52
Chapter XVII	Of the Chapter General . .	53
Chapter XVIII	Of the Superior General . .	46
Chapter XIX	Of the Councillors General and the Secretary General .	58
Chapter XX	Of the Management and Temporal Administration of the Institute	62
Chapter XXI	Of Foundations	64
Chapter XXII	Of Local Superiors . . .	66
Chapter XXIII	Of the Mistress of Novices .	67
Chapter XXIV	Of the other Charges in the House	69
Chapter XXV	Of the Observance . . .	71

CONSTITUTIONS

OF THE

Society of the Missionary Sisters of Charity of Calcutta

PART I

The Aim of the Society, Admission, Training, Profession and Religious Life of its Members, their Dismissal.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Aim, Name and Patron of the Society.

1. The general aim of the Society is to quench the thirst of Jesus Christ on the Cross for love of souls, by the sisters' observance of the four Vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience and of devoting themselves to work among the poor according to the Constitutions.

2. The special aim of the Society is to labour at the conversion and sanctification of the poor in the slums; that is, by nursing the sick and the dying, by gathering and

teaching little street-children, by visiting and caring for beggars and their children, by giving shelter to the abandoned.

3. In working for the salvation of the poor, it should be the aim of the sisters to bring a knowledge of the Catholic Faith to the people under their care by example, deed and word, if opportunity offers.

4. That the Society may more easily attain its end, let each sister choose the Immaculate Queen of Heaven for her Mother. She must not only love and venerate Her, but fly to Her with childlike confidence in all her joys and sorrows.

5. The official name of the Society is: The Society of the Missionary Sisters of Charity of Calcutta.

6. The Society is dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cause of our Joy and Queen of the Missions.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Members of the Society.

7. All the members of the Society form one family.

All have the same obligations, the same privileges and work for the same purpose.

8. The sisters will be assigned to the various works of the Society according to the judgment of the Superiors.

9. Within the Society and its houses the members shall call each other "Sister" with the name given to them at the time of their reception of the habit.

10. The Superior General shall be called "Mother" by all the sisters in the Society; the local Superior only by the sisters and the inmates of her own house.

11. The members of this Congregation are all those who belong to it by the Profession of Vows; this membership is temporary or perpetual according to the nature of the Vows which have been taken.

12. The order of precedence will be the following:—

a) The Superior General.

b) The first Councillor who is the Assistant and who, should the office of the

Superior General become vacant, acts as Vicar.

c) The other Councillors General in the order of their election.

d) The ex-Superiors General.

e) The local Superior of the Mother House.

f) The Secretary General

g) The Procuratrix General.

h) The local Superiors according to seniority by first Profession.

i) The Novice Mistress.

j) The sisters who have taken perpetual Vows according to the order of their Profession (in case the date of their Profession is the same according to seniority in age).

k) The sisters who have temporary Vows according to seniority by Profession.

l) The novices according to the order of their Vestition.

m) The postulants according to the order of their admission.

13. The local Superior in her own house gives precedence only to those who have a greater authority over her own subjects, v.g. the Superior General or her Delegate.

14. Whenever their office is terminated all sisters have in the Congregation the same place as before, without title or privilege, the Superiors General only being excepted.

15. The sisters cease to be members of this Congregation by passing to another Congregation, by legitimately leaving the Congregation and by dismissal.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Religious Habit.

16. In India the sisters shall wear a plain Indian dress: that is a white habit, a white sari with blue par, a girdle made of rope, a crucifix and sandals.

17. Novices wear the same habit as the professed sisters, but an entirely white sari and no crucifix.

18. All shall esteem the habit as the outward sign of their special dedication to God

and as a reminder of the edification expected from all who wear it.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Admission and Training of Candidates.

19. As the Society is and will be what its members make it, great care and prudence must be exercised in admitting candidates.

20. The right to admit candidates into the Society belongs to the Superior of the Society.

21. Candidates shall not be admitted unless they be free from impediments, guided by a right intention, desirous to serve the poor according to obedience and to live and work as Missionary Sisters of Charity.

22. The following are debarred from valid admission:

a) Those who, having abandoned the faith, have adhered to a non-Catholic sect.

b) Those who have not reached the age requisite for the noviciate, i.e. at least fifteen years completed.

c) Those who enter or are received into the Society under the influence of violence, grave fear or fraud.

d) Married persons as long as the marriage bond lasts.

e) Those who are or have been bound by religious Profession, as long as they have no dispensation from the Holy See.

f) Those who are threatened with punishment for a grave crime which they have committed and of which they have been or may be accused.

The following are illicitly though validly admitted to the noviciate:

a) Those who are burdened with debts which they are unable to discharge.

b) Those who are liable to render accounts or are implicated in other secular negotiations which might involve the Society into lawsuits or similar trouble.

c) Those whose parents, that is father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, are in great necessity and need their assistance;

and parents whose help is necessary for the maintenance or education of their children.

d) Those of the Oriental Rites, without the written permission of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church.

Dispensation from the above mentioned impediments affecting either the validity or licitness of the noviciate is reserved to the Holy See.

23. Before admission the candidates must present a certificate of baptism and confirmation and a testimony of their good conduct from their Parish Priest or from some other well-known Priest. A recent health certificate is also required.

24. The candidates must be healthy in body and mind, able to bear the hardships of this special vocation. They must be able to learn the language of the people among whom they work. They need be of a cheerful disposition and have a sound judgment. They may be rich or poor and of any nationality, provided they possess the above mentioned qualities.

(a) *Of the Postulancy.*

25. For a period of three months before the postulancy they will work as aspirants with the sisters in the slums and live at home or in the house of the professed in separate quarters.

26. The postulants will stay in the house of the noviciate under a special Mistress if possible and for six months.

27. Each candidate shall be given the list of all that is required. The outfit of each postulant must be in exact conformity with it and anything superfluous shall be returned without delay. A record is to be kept of the outfit brought by each postulant.

28. The purpose of the postulancy is to give candidates the opportunity to test their vocation under the care of the Mistress and to learn in a practical manner the rudiments of the religious life.

29. The Mistress should give the candidates a full and detailed explanation of our life and work, to enable them at the end of

six months to make their choice in writing before joining the noviciate.

30. The Superior General of the Society shall see every postulant individually and after consulting the Mistress of Postulants decide with the deliberative vote of her Council for her admission to the noviciate.

31. If the postulant is found unsuitable, she must be told to leave.

32. The Superior General will inform the Ordinary of the place, at least two months in advance, of the approaching admission of a postulant to the reception of the habit, so that at least thirty days before the reception ceremony he may proceed in person or through a Priest delegated by him to examine the postulant. The same shall be done before the first temporary Vows and the perpetual Profession.

33. Before receiving the habit the postulants shall make a spiritual retreat of eight days and a general confession according to the direction of the Confessor.

(b) *Of the Noviciate.*

34. The noviciate begins with the taking of the habit. The ceremony of the clothing is recorded in a special register, signed by the Superior and the novice.

35. The noviciate lasts two years. The first year is the canonical year, it must be complete and without interruption. It has to be a year of prayer and contemplation, of penance and separation from the world.

36. The canonical year is interrupted in such a way that it must be begun again in its entirety and completed, if the novice is sent away by the Superior and has left the house, or without the permission of the Superior has deserted the house with the intention of not returning or finally if, even with the permission of the Superior and from whatever motive, she has remained for more than thirty days, whether continuously or not, outside the house, though with the intention of coming back.

If the novice with the permission of the Superior or constrained by force has passed

more than fifteen days and not more than thirty, even interruptedly, outside the precincts of the house but under the obedience of the Superior, it is necessary and sufficient for the validity of the noviciate that she supply the number of days so passed outside ; for a period not exceeding fifteen days, the supplementing for this period can be prescribed by the Superiors but it is not necessary for validity.

37. During this year the novices are not to be employed as a rule in much external work; they should apply themselves heart and soul to the study of the interior life and to the practice of living in God's presence. They will study the Constitutions and understand the obligations to which they bind themselves by the four Vows. They must come to know and love the spirit of the Society which is one of total surrender, loving trust and cheerfulness.

38. The second year of noviciate is to test further and improve the dispositions and ability for our work, to render the novices more efficient in the several duties of our vocation. For this purpose they shall be given detailed lessons about the teaching of Religion and the Gospels, the Christian Doctrine and Church History. As novices of the first year they may accompany a professed sister to one of the slums for half the day, except during the last two months of the noviciate.

39. Two months before the end of the noviciate the novice shall make a formal request in writing for admission to Profession.

40. Two months before the end of the noviciate the novice shall be examined by the Superior of the Society and her assistant, on her knowledge of the Vows, the Constitutions and the spirit of the Society. They must ascertain whether she is ready to lead such a life cheerfully and out of pure love of God and souls. She must besides pass a practical examination on teaching religion and undergo a complete medical examination as well. The reports of these examinations shall be submitted to the Superior of the Society who, with the deliberative vote of her Council, may admit the novice to the Vows or refuse her.

41. If there is a doubt as to the suitability of the novice, the noviciate may be prolonged for not more than six months. If the novice is found unsuitable, she shall be told to leave.

42. The novices before their first Profession shall make an eight days' spiritual retreat.

CHAPTER V.

Of Profession.

43. Those who are admitted to Profession must take the four Vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience and of working among the poor according to the Constitutions.

44. During the first three years, the Vows are taken for one year only, then for three years and next for life, at the final Profession which cannot take place before the age of 21 completed. For the first Profession the minimum canonical age is 16 years completed.

45. The formula for the Vows is as follows:

In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

I, Sister M....., vow and promise to Almighty God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in your hands Mother M..... and in the presence of our Ordinary (*or* of the delegate of our Ordinary), for one year (*or* for three years *or* for life), poverty, chastity, obedience and also to work among the poor, according to the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Charity. Amen.

46. The sisters who desire to renew their Vows shall apply in writing to the Superior at least three months before their expiration. The canonical renewal of temporary Vows is to be made by each sister on the anniversary of the very day on which the first Vows were pronounced. The final Profession takes place on the same anniversary.

47. At the end of their annual retreat and on the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary the professed sisters shall renew their Vows in common according to this formula :

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

By the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ and under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cause of our Joy and Queen of the Missions, I, Sister M....., renew and confirm the Vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience and that of working among the the poor, made by me in the Society of the Missionary Sisters of Charity according to the Constitutions of this Society. Amen."

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Vow and Virtue of Poverty.

48. By the Vow of Poverty the sisters renounce the right to dispose without the Superiors' permission of anything that has a monetary value. As for the virtue of poverty, it also implies that the sisters divest themselves of all inordinate attachment to temporal things and bear the privation of these, if occasion arise, cheerfully and with fortitude.

49. Before her temporal Profession the novice must surrender the administration,

use and usufruct of her property to whomsoever she wishes for the whole period during which she will be bound by her Vows.

If this cession and disposition has not been made because the novice possessed no properties but later on any properties come to her, or if it has been made and later on new properties by whatever title accrue, it must be enacted or renewed notwithstanding her having made her Profession.

This cession and disposition a professed sister can modify, not however on her own accord, but with the permission of her Superior General, provided that the modification, at least if it bears upon a considerable portion of the properties, be not made in favour of the Congregation itself. Still, if she were to leave, this cession and disposition would cease to operate.

Besides, whatever the professed should acquire—either by their own industry or because they belong to the Society, is acquired for the Society, not for themselves.

50. The novice before making Profession of temporary Vows shall freely make a will

concerning all property which she actually possesses or may possess one day. If she is a minor at the time of making this will, she shall renew it as soon as she comes of age.

This will, once made, cannot be changed without permission from the Holy See or, if the matter be urgent and there is no time for recourse thither, not without the permission of the Superior General or, if even she cannot be contacted, without the permission of the local Superior.

51. The sisters of each house and their poor will entirely depend on Divine Providence. Therefore, whenever it is necessary, let begging be done willingly in the spirit of poverty and cheerful trust.

52. The sisters may never accept any fees or any gift for work done, since their one aim is to serve the poor and to give freely what they have freely received.

53. Clothes must be in quality and quantity the same for all, unless in a special case the Superior has good reason to judge otherwise.

54. The food shall be prepared, served and taken according to the customs of the country in which the sisters live. The food must be the same for all except in time of sickness. It must be sufficient, wholesome, well prepared and varied, so as to maintain good health which is essential for the work of their vocation.

55. The sisters shall sleep in a common dormitory. In time of sickness or in case of old age, the sister shall be given a room from where she can easily join in all the spiritual exercises and where she can receive daily Holy Communion.

56. Let the Superior see that nothing be introduced into the house or the work which does not conform with religious simplicity and poverty.

57. On the other hand the Superior is bound to provide for the legitimate needs of the sisters but always in conformity with the spirit of poverty.

58. The Vow of Poverty obliges the sister not to accept or borrow or dispose of

anything without the Superior's knowledge and consent. The sister shall never ask her parents or friends for anything whatsoever for her personal use. If anything is presented to her it must be made over to the Superior.

59. The Society may possess buildings of its own and other property.

60. When at home the sisters may work on the farm, if any, or make things for sale, but above all, let them have an absolute confidence in Divine Providence. If they seek first the Kingdom of God, according to God's promise everything else will be added unto them. Therefore they shall live by begging alms, provided always the Superior be vigilant lest the world enter her convent through these alms and injure the spirit of poverty.

61. The sisters shoud not be ashamed to beg from door to door if necessary, becoming beggars for the poor members of Christ, Who Himself lived on alms during His public life and Whom they serve in the sick and the poor.

62. The sisters shall never keep, give away or lend things without leave of the Superior. When a sister goes from one house to another she is not to take anything with her without permission.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Vow and Virtue of Chastity.

63. By the Vow of Chastity the sisters not only renounce marriage, but also engage themselves to avoid every external or internal offence against the Angelic Virtue.

64. Angelic Purity must be the aim of each sister, and to preserve it she must acquire a personal love for the most Pure Heart of Mary, Cause of our Joy. She must guard her heart free from any unsound affection however slight, for a pure heart will easily see God in His poor and have no thought of self.

65. Any difficulties arising from their continual intercourse with the outsiders should be manifested in all simplicity and trust to the Confessor or, if the sister so desires, to

the Superior. But all exterior temptations and dangers coming to themselves or to any other should always be mentioned at once to the Superior.

66. All should avoid most carefully idle conversation or gossip when visiting and nursing the sick, thus guarding themselves against the danger of worldly views and ways.

67. Let them resolutely be on their guard against the evil of particular friendships which draw the soul away from God, foster selfishness and spoil the work for souls.

68. The sisters are not to touch each other even in jest ; they should not use pet names or allow any personal preference, inclination or affection to interfere with their charity towards all.

69. When they handle the sick and the needy, the sisters shall remember that they are dealing with the body of Christ, and therefore, let devotion and love accompany all their actions.

70. No books, magazines and papers except those given for common use are to

be read by ours. Should any other reading be found helpful or necessary, permission must be asked each time. Letters sent by, or addressed to, the sisters must be handed over to the Superior that they may be seen by her. All the sisters are at liberty to send letters exempt from every control to the Holy See and its Legate in the country, to the local Ordinary, to their own higher Superiors and to the Superior of the house if she be absent ; and from all these they may receive letters likewise not to be seen by anybody.

71. In every house there shall be a part reserved for the exclusive use of the sisters. No person of the other sex shall be admitted into it, save such persons as are exempted according to the law of the Church, i.e., the local Ordinary canonically visiting the convent or those delegated by him according to Canon Law, the Confessor and his substitute to administer the Sacraments to the sick, the Rulers of States and those whom the Superior, after taking due precautions, and after obtaining at least the habitual

approval of the Ordinary, can allow to enter for some necessary work. The enclosure will comprise at least the dormitory, the refectory and those rooms where the sisters are usually working or studying.

72. No part of the convent nor any of its annexes shall be used for exterior work among the poor.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Vow and Virtue of Obedience.

73. By the Vow of Obedience the sisters bind themselves to obey all lawful Superiors, commanding according to the Constitutions, in all things which are connected with the life and the work of the Society.

74. Let the sisters remember that the Sovereign Pontiff, the Ordinary of the place, the Superior General and her delegate can give orders that bind under the Vow.

75. The precise matter of the Vow of Obedience includes only the explicit command given by those Superiors when they use the formula "In the name of Holy

Obedience" or "We order by a formal precept". All other commands are the object of the virtue, not of the Vow. Let the local Superior not give any order in the name of Holy Obedience, except in extraordinary cases, and then she shall inform immediately the Superior General. The formal precept must be given in writing or in the presence of at least two witnesses with the above mentioned words.

76. Our Obedience must be cheerful, prompt, and also blind and simple without question or excuse. All should remember that the Superior whom they obey takes the place of Jesus Christ Our Lord for Whose love they obey.

77. Whenever the Superior thinks it desirable for the greater glory of God to change a sister's residence, work or companions, let her welcome this change as the very Will of God.

78. Let all love and esteem the privilege of living under Obedience, because it is not only a sure means of fulfilling the Will of

God, but also a very special grace and honour. Moreover perfect Obedience is an unfailing source of peace, inward joy and the one condition of a close union with God.

79. To strengthen herself in this virtue of Obedience the sister must strive to refrain from all criticism, prejudice or murmuring against Superiors, as well as from all servile fear and self-seeking.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Vow of devoting oneself to work among the Poor.

80. By this Vow the sister binds herself to give wholehearted and free service to the poor according to obedience.

81. Let each sister see Jesus Christ in the person of the poor: the more repugnant the work or the persons, the greater also must be her faith, love and cheerful devotion in ministering to Our Lord in this distressing disguise.

CHAPTER X.

Of the Exercises of Piety.

82. The spiritual means adopted by the Society for the sanctification of its members are:—

Each day—morning and evening prayers; meditation for half an hour; Holy Mass with opportunity to receive Holy Communion; general and particular examen twice a day; visit to the Blessed Sacrament; rosary, spiritual reading and the Office of the Immaculate Conception.

Each week—Confession; one hour of adoration with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, if possible; speaking of faults in chapter; penances in the refectory.

Monthly—A day of recollection.

Annually—A retreat of eight days; renewal of Vows twice ; one triduum.

83. The patronal feast of the Society is the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cause of our Joy.

84. Besides the feasts in honour of the Blessed Trinity, Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, those of Our Lady and St. Joseph, St. Peter and St. Paul, St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus will be celebrated with special solemnity.

85. All the sisters who are not on duty must assist at all the community exercises. If on account of unforeseen sick-calls or other duties any spiritual exercise is missed, it shall be made up as soon as possible before or by 9 p.m. when the obligation of making up ceases.

86. As Confession is one of the best means to make the soul strong, it should be used according to the need and choice of the sister. She must be like a child in confession, simple and open.

87. The sisters shall approach the Sacrament of Penance at least once a week. The Superior has no right to ask why a sister wants to make her confession, nor shall she prevent her from going to confession, whenever so desired, to any of the approved Confessors.

88. There shall be only one ordinary Confessor appointed by the Ordinary of the place to hear the confessions of the community; but if a sister requests for the peace of her soul or for her greater progress in the spiritual life a special Confessor, recourse will be had to the Ordinary. If any sister, for the peace of her conscience, address herself to a Confessor approved by the local Ordinary to hear the confessions of women, this confession made in any church or semi-public oratory or any place lawfully appointed, even by way of act, for the hearing of women's confessions, is valid and lawful; and her Superior may not prohibit it or make any enquiry concerning it, even indirectly, and the religious are under no obligation to inform their Superior at all in the matter.

When seriously ill, even without their being in danger of death, the sisters may call for any Priest approved to hear the confessions of women, and as often as they wish

during their serious illness they may make their confession to him, nor may the Superior either directly or indirectly prevent them from doing so.

89. The sister shall carefully abstain from any remarks about confession, the Confessor and the time spent in the confessional; still less are these to be topics of conversation.

90. To every house is given an extraordinary Confessor, who at least four times a year will come to the religious house. All the sisters must present themselves to him at least to receive his blessing.

91. The sisters shall consider it a privilege to assist at Holy Mass daily. They should show their gratitude for this great gift by entering into the spirit of the Mass which is one of total sacrifice and love, and by making those of our Faith attend Mass on Sundays and days of obligation.

CHAPTER XI.
Of the Practice of Virtue.

92. As each sister of this Society is to become a co-worker of Christ in the slums,

she ought to understand what God and the Society expect from her. Let Christ radiate and live His life in her and through her in the slums. Let the poor seeing her be drawn to Christ and invite Him to enter their homes and their lives. Let the sick and the suffering find in her a real angel of comfort and consolation ; let the little ones of the streets cling to her because she reminds them of Him, the Friend of the little ones.

9. Let the sisters love each other as God loves each of them with a special most intense love, without being concerned at all about nationality or social standing. Now that they belong to the Society, this must be their true home and family.

94. Let them love humility so earnestly that they may accept humiliation readily, and even with joy. Therefore they shall receive correction and admonition in the spirit of faith without excuse or complaint.

95. All should meditate frequently on the humility of Christ and pray to the Holy Ghost for light to know themselves better

and better, since self-knowledge leads to humility.

96. Let none glory in their success but refer all to God in deepest thankfulness ; on the other hand no failure should dishearten them as long as they have done their best.

97. The practice of corporal penance should be discreet and moderate and all must abide by the approved custom of our Society. For special public penance the permission of the Superior is required as well.

98. Every Friday and on the eve of special feasts of the Church, the sisters shall perform public penance in the refectory.

CHAPTER XII.

Of Going out, Visits, Journeys, Alms.

99. No sister shall ever leave the house alone and without permission.

100. The permission of the Ordinary must be obtained for soliciting alms in his diocese; and also, of the Parish Priest in his jurisdiction.

101. They must have with them letters by which they may prove to the Ordinaries, pastors and other persons that they have been duly appointed to collect alms for the work. They must also have with them the letters from the Ordinaries whose permission they have obtained.

102. When the sisters receive alms, they should note down the donors' intentions and use all monies and gifts accordingly.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of Study and Work.

103. No work should be introduced or accepted which is not in conformity with the aim of the Society. As the Society and all its members must be free to go in search of souls—to carry God's love amongst the poorest of the poor, it follows that no schools with regular curriculum, nor boarding-schools, nor hospitals or nursing homes can be accepted, except only those needed for the homeless destitute.

104. The sisters after their Profession may be sent to Catholic Schools or Hospitals to be trained for their special duties. They should be two together or more, so as to help each other to fervour.

(a) *Education.*

105. In the slums the sisters should find a place where they will gather little street children, whoever they may be. Their very first concern is to make them clean, feed them and then only teach them, that is, just a little reading and writing. Religion must be proposed to them in a simple, interesting and attractive way. Whatever the sisters teach, let there be always something the children can enjoy and yet at the same time learn.

106. The sisters should teach beautiful hymns and songs, the more the better, and needle-work to the girls. They must provide for suitable recreation as well.

107. The sisters shall find out the older children who have not received the Sacraments, taking special care to instruct them without delay.

108. The sisters should speak of the love of God, of Our Lady and St. Joseph and of the Guardian Angel as something real and easy, so that these little neglected children may feel and realize that they too are the loved children of the Heavenly Father.

109. On Sundays and days of obligation the sisters shall gather their own groups and take them to the nearest church.

110. The sisters in charge of these children must try to make them happy and train them little by little to be more resourceful and able to fend for themselves instead of relying always on others.

111. Near the place where they teach the children, the sisters will have a dispensary, where medicine and other things may be distributed free.

(b) *Visiting the Sick.*

112. The sisters shall visit the destitute or the sick, going from house to house or

wherever these may be found and they must render to all the humblest services.

113. They shall encourage the sick of our Faith, even if not dying, to ask for confession and Holy Communion, and then inform the Priest in good time of the number of bed-ridden patients desiring Holy Communion.

114. When needed the sisters will also assist the mothers at child-birth. If on examination they find that this is a hospital case, they themseves will take her there and and not leave her until she is well cared for.

115. If the child be born at home, the sisters must visit the mother for some time and take care to see that both mother and child get the required food and rest.

116. The sisters visiting the sick in the homes and on the streets must try to insist with much gentle patience on cleanliness, especially if there be an epidemic. The sisters themselves must take all reasonable precautions whilst nursing these cases.

117. In their visits let the sisters encourage true devotion to the Sacred Heart and the family rosary. They should induce the Catholic families to be consecrated to the Sacred Heart and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

(c) *The Dying.*

118. The sisters helping the dying must be extremely kind and gentle. They should make the Mercy of God very real so as to induce the dying person to turn to God with filial confidence.

119. They shall pray near them and make sure to send for the Priest well in time. In the case of non-Christians in danger of death but still conscious, if it be not possible to call a Priest, the sister may baptise them after due instruction, provided that the dying have signified their consent.

120. If the person dies and there is no one to take care of the body, the sisters shall prepare it for burial.

121. If children be left total orphans, they should be taken care of, until accepted

in some family or regular orphanage. This should be done as soon as possible.

122. If a sick person in danger of death requires watching after 5 p.m. the sisters shall inform the Superior in time, and if the place be safe, she will send two other sisters for this purpose.

123. While visiting the sick and the dying, the sisters must not accept any food but must have provided themselves with the things they need before setting out from their house. They may beg a meal in some convent if need be.

(d) *The Beggars.*

124. The sisters may visit the professional beggars, gather their children, nurse their sick and treat their many skin diseases.

125. The sisters must take every possible precaution when washing and treating their sick.

126. The aim of these visits must be to bring to their minds with infinite patience that they too are the children of God and

that self-respect and some desire to work must enter their lives and make them normal citizens. They should learn the beauty of an active life for the support of their families.

127. Without offending anyone, if they can help it, the sisters should be careful as to giving help to those who remain beggars through laziness but let them show great charity for the real sick and the aged beggars.

(e) *The Home of the Abandoned.*

128. In this home the sisters shall gather the lame, the blind, the crippled, the incurables, in a word any person who is abandoned by all and left alone to suffer and die.

129. The sisters will also try to rescue fallen girls and women whom poverty and starvation have driven into the street. Tactful kindness and persevering patience must save them from their wretched ways and bring them to the All-Merciful Father of all.

130. The inmates must know that they are free to leave; if they choose to stay, they

must observe the rule of the house and work as directed.

131. The sisters must never refuse shelter to anybody, but give a warm welcome to all for Our Lord's sake.

132. Those who wish to stay must be given plenty to do. The sisters will teach them useful things, needle-work, weaving, cooking, house-work, etc., by which they can earn their living on leaving us.

(f) *The Village Work.*

133. The sisters shall do the same work in the villages; only their stay there must not be permanent; after touring they must come back to the Mother House or to a central house for a full week's stay.

134. The Superior of the Society should try never to refuse a missionary the help of her sisters. For this work she should not send more nor less than three.

135. The sisters chosen for this apostolic work must remember that they are the carriers of the Light of Christ. Therefore

they must act with great prudence and reserve in all cases without any exception.

136. The room or hut given them for their use must be kept strictly private. No man or woman should enter it, not even the Priest.

137. As the sisters will be in frequent contact with the Priest touring the mission, they must show great willingness to help and yet never depart from due reserve and discretion. They shall show him great respect and reverence, always anxious to oblige, business-like in their ways, without wasting time nor words.

138. While in the village let the sisters beg their food, and if this is not sufficient they will try to make up the amount as best they can since a fasting or starving missionary would not be much of a help.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of Health and Sickness Duties towards the Deceased.

139. As too much solicitude in things pertaining to the body is to be feared, so a prudent and intelligent care of preserving health and strength or of regaining them for the service of God is the duty of all. Therefore, when sisters find that anything is hurtful to them or that they are in need of some special diet, and also, in matters of lodging, office, exercise or other things, let them tell the Superior or her whom the Superior shall appoint for that purpose. However, they shall observe two things: first that before proposing it, they pray about it, in order to judge whether they should do so or not, and secondly that once they have laid the matter before the Superior, they leave the whole matter to her decision.

140. When anyone finds herself indisposed, she shall apply to the infirmarian or to the Superior. No one may choose a physician or take advice of him or her without the Superior's approval.

141. In no case, even in minor ailments, is any sister allowed to take a medicine of any kind without permission of the infirmarian or the sister in charge.

142. As soon as serious danger is anticipated and well before the sister becomes unconscious, great zeal must be exercised to prepare the soul for the decisive passage to eternity and to console and encourage her in her last moments. Care should be taken that Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction be administered in time and in the presence of as many of the community as possible.

143. On the death of a sister, the Superior shall, without delay, inform all the other houses of the death, soliciting the suffrages of the Society for the deceased sister. She shall also inform the deceased's relatives.

144. The suffrages are as follows :—

(a) Each sister shall offer Holy Mass, Holy Communion, the Way of the Cross and the Rosary, three times.

(b) The house to which the deceased belonged shall have the Holy Sacrifice offered ten times.

(c) In other houses one Requiem Mass shall be offered for the deceased. Let suffrages be made also for a deceased Sovereign Pontiff, for a deceased Cardinal Prefect of the S. Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and for a deceased local Ordinary.

CHAPTER XV

On leaving the Society and on Dismissal from it.

145. Postulants and novices in whom are not found a solid vocation and the qualities necessary for the life in the Society may be dismissed by the Superior General. Novices, however, with the deliberative vote of the General Council.

146. One who has made temporary Vows may freely leave after they have expired; likewise the Superior General with the consultative vote of her Council may for just and grave motives refuse to admit the sister

to the renewal of her temporary Vows or to perpetual Profession, not however for reasons of ill health, unless there be certain proof that her illness had been fraudulently concealed or dissimulated before her Profession. Yet, if there are other sufficient reasons, ill health does not prevent the sister's exclusion.

147. Repeated admonitions together with salutary penance must be given to the sister before there can be question of dismissal. Ill health, unless it is proved with certainty that it had been fraudulently concealed or dissimulated before Profession, is never a reason for dismissal.

148. The motives for dismissal of a sister of temporary Vows must be grave; they must be made known to her in time; full liberty of reply must be given her, and her replies must be faithfully submitted to the local Ordinary and to the Superior General who will send the opinion of her Council and her own to the local Ordinary. The decree of dismissal can only be issued by him.

149. For the dismissal of a perpetually professed sister, grave external causes are required, such as a great lack of religious spirit or important and frequent violations of the Constitutions together with incorrigibility, experience having proved in the judgment of the Superior General and her Council that there is no hope of amendment.

150. When the whole case has been diligently examined by the Council, and if it be so decided by a majority of votes, the Superior General will refer the case, with all acts and documents, to the Ordinary of the place.

151. In the case of a grave and exterior scandal or in the case of very great and imminent harm threatening the community the religious may be sent back to the world by the Superior General with the consent of her Council and even, if there is danger in delay and there is no time to consult the Superior General, by the local Superior with the consent of her Council and she must put off the religious habit but in both cases the

decision must immediately be submitted to the judgment of the local Ordinary.

152. In the specific cases mentioned by Canon Law, namely: public apostasy from the Catholic Faith, running away with a person of the other sex, contracting marriage, a sister whether of temporary or perpetual Vows, shall be regarded as lawfully dismissed.

153. If a religious, even one having made perpetual Vows, is dismissed by the local Ordinary, she is by this very fact freed from all religious Vows.

154. In the case of a dismissed sister who has no or insufficient means of support, the Society must in charity give her what is necessary to return home in a safe and becoming manner and to provide her in accordance with natural equity with the means to support herself decently for a certain period. The length of this period will be determined by common agreement or, in case of disagreement, by the local Ordinary.

155. The perpetually professed religious who unlawfully leaves the religious house

with the intention of not returning gravely violates her Vows. If, however, repenting she comes back and submits to the penalties inflicted on her, she must be taken back but she will occupy the last place among the perpetually professed. Any sister, professed Dr novice, who has legitimately left the Congregation or who has been sent away cannot be admitted a second time in the Congregation.

156. Let all with due charity pray for those sisters who leave the Society.

PART II.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the highest Authority over the Congregation.

157. All sisters are subject to the Roman Pontiff as to the highest Moderator of all and they are bound to obey him even in virtue of the Vow of Obedience.

158. They are subject also, within the scope of the Sacred Canons, to the Ordinaries of the places in which their

Institute has houses. To these same Ordinaries the sisters owe respect and obedience, according to the prescriptions of Canon Law.

159. The supreme internal authority over the whole Congregation is exercised normally by the Superior General with her Council, but in exceptional circumstances by the Chapter General.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the Chapter General.

160. The Chapter General shall be composed of the Superior General, her Council, the Secretary General, the Procuratrix General, the Mistress of novices, all the local Superiors and one deputy sister from each house of the Society.

161. The deputies will be elected by all the professed sisters of the house, according to the rules laid down for the election of the Superior General in No. 165. To be validly elected deputy of a house the sister must belong to that same house and be a professed of perpetual Vows.

162. The election of the Superior General in the Chapter General may be presided over by the local Ordinary or his delegate, according to his decision.

163. The Chapter General shall be convened every sixth year for the election of the Superior General and her Councillors.

164. The better to fulfil their office, the electors or capitulants shall before the election have recourse to God by fervent prayer and penance.

165. The Superior General is elected by secret ballot and by an absolute majority of votes. If after three scrutinies an absolute majority has not been obtained, a fourth ballot shall be taken in which only those two members will be eligible who had the greatest number of votes in the third ballot. In case more than two members had an equal number of votes in the third ballot, only the two older by first Profession and by age shall be eligible in the fourth ballot. In this fourth ballot these two member candidates cannot vote. Should this fourth

ballot result in a tie, then the senior by first Profession is elected; and in case both have made their Profession on the same day, the senior in age is elected. The person who is elected cannot refuse the office unless the Chapter is willing to yield to her objections.

166. The Superior General must be at least 40 years of age and must have been a professed for at least 10 years counting from the first Profession in the Society. She shall be elected for six years, but she can be re-elected for a second and third term without special approval of the local Ordinary.

167. The Councillors are elected as under No. 165 and for six years. They must be at least 30 years of age and be professed of perpetual Vows.

168. The Superior General shall not begin to exercise her office before she has received the confirmation of her appointment from the local Ordinary.

169. The first Councillor is the Assistant. Should the office of the Superior General be

vacant, she shall act as Vicar and convoke within three months the Chapter General which will act in all things as at the six-yearly meeting.

170. Should it be necessary to settle any important business, the Superior General shall, with permission of the local Ordinary, convene a Chapter General extraordinary.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the Superior General.

171. The Superior General governs the whole Society according to these Constitutions and makes all appointments, subject to the exceptions here mentioned, to the charges and offices in the Society.

172. She will exercise her authority in the Society with the help of her Councillors. She should, if possible, not be the local Superior of any house and must reside as a rule in the Mother House.

173. Every year she or her delegate shall visit each house of the Society to ascertain whether the Constitutions are observed

accurately and to foster as much as is in her power the spirit of the Society.

174. She shall preside over the Council General and the Chapter General.

175. She shall cause the Constitutions as well as her own prescriptions to be observed. She should see that all Superiors fulfil exactly the duties of their offices; that they be neither too parsimonious nor prodigal, nor absorbed in temporal affairs to the detriment of spiritual interests. To her it belongs to set all in motion through her assistants and other officers. This supposes a thorough acquaintance with the whole work; so that she may understand all, maintain all and render all useful within the limit of her power.

176. She has the right to send circular letters to the whole Society and receive the reports of each Superior.

177. Should she consider herself obliged before God to resign her charge before the end of her term of office, on account of impaired health, advanced age or any other

good reason, she should make known her motives to her Councillors before presenting her petition to the local Ordinary.

178. Since the vigour and development of the Society depend to a large extent on the Superior of the Society, and as she has to give an account of her stewardship to the Supreme Judge, she and all members of the Society should pray daily for the graces she needs in the discharge of her duties.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the Councillors General and the Secretary General.

179. Their office shall be to give advice and help to the Superior General on being asked by her to do so; in certain affairs they shall give a decisive vote; and lastly they may freely propose whatever, after prayer, they deem useful to the Society.

180. The following shall be decided by the suffrages of the Council General:—

a) The erection of a new house ;

b) The suppression of an existing house ;

c) The presentation of the names of local Superiors and of the Mistress of novices;

d) The extension of the term of office of a local Superior if after the three years an extension be deemed necessary;

e) The dismissal from the Institute of a novice and of a sister who has taken the Vows either temporary or perpetual;

f) The removal from office of a Councillor General, a Mistress of novices, or a local Superior for a grave reason when it shall be deemed necessary.

g) The substitution till the next Chapter General of a sister in the place of a Councillor General deceased or removed or perpetually prevented from fulfilling her office;

h) (and having in view the prescriptions of the code of Canon Law regarding the permissions to be asked for)

i) The contracts to be made on behalf of the Society and the approbation of money matters;

ii) The contracting of debts;

iii) The selling, pledging or mortgaging of movables of value.

181. Whenever in the discussion of such matters the secret votes of the sisters are equally balanced, the Superior General has the casting vote.

182. The Council General shall meet in the beginning of each month and besides whenever business shall require it.

183. The acts of the Council General shall be written by the Secretary General, who has no right to vote except if she is at the same time a Councillor.

184. The Superior General and her Councillors must elect a Secretary General and a Procuratrix General, who will remain in office at the discretion of the Council General. The Secretary may be taken among the Councillors (except that she should not be the first Councillor); the Procuratrix General, however, cannot be chosen among the Councillors, save in an extraordinary case and temporarily.

185. The General Secretary will keep under lock and key the following :—

a) Documents from Rome and from the local Ordinary concerning the Society and the other documents of importance;

b) The entrance book of the Society. This book should have as many columns as are required to inscribe in order the members, their names in religion, their family and baptismal names, the date and place of their birth, the dwelling-place of their parents at the reception of the habit, the dates of their admission to the noviciate and to Profession, their dismissal or decease. It is of the greatest importance in keeping these registers to mark changes as soon as they occur and to inscribe dates and names only at sight of the documents that certify them;

c) A list of the houses of the Society;

d) A register giving the names of those in charge of different houses and works;

e) The documents concerning the dates and conditions of the foundations.

186. She will write by order and in the name of the Superior General all letters and acts which relate to the affairs of the Society.

187. The Secretary General may also be appointed to make the work known by writing and speaking. Therefore, let her pray fervently to the Holy Ghost for the grace required. Let her style be simple and without any exaggeration; let her state facts just as they occur, not forgetting the bright side. Let her be very careful of useless talk and waste of time.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the Management and Temporal Administration of the Institute.

188. All property that belongs to the Society and to the Mother House shall be administered by the Superior General and Council with the help of the Procuratrix General.

189. The Procuratrix General will keep an accurate account of the money of the Society and of the Mother House.

190. At the end of every third month the Procuratrix General shall give to the Superior General and to the Council a quarterly account of the whole of the administration, exhibiting her books and vouchers for all disbursements, and she shall give an accurate report of the actual state of the money of the Society. These shall be examined by the Superior General and her Councillors, and if they be found accurate, shall be signed by them.

191. Once a year the Superior General shall send her financial report to the local Ordinary.

192. The Superior General must ask the previous consent of the local Ordinary for all investments of money and for all changes to be made in them. She shall refer all important matters of temporal administration to him.

-93. All the property of the local houses shall be administered by the local Superior with council.

194. Each house shall give part of its total surplus money to be determined by the

General Chapter to the general fund of the Society provided all debts of the house be paid.

195. The general fund is formed from:—

a) The contributions sent by each house;

b) Presents, alms and legacies coming to the Society unconditionally;

c) The extraordinary sums raised by the Mother House for special needs;

d) Interest on these sums.

The general fund must be applied as follows : —

a) For all expenses in the service of the Society like visitation, printing, travelling;

b) For the maintenance of the noviciate, if necessary;

c) For the support of poorer houses or for new foundations.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of Foundations.

196. For the erection of any house the deliberative vote of the General Council and

the written consent of the local Ordinary are required (nay, in the case of the erection of a first house in a fresh ecclesiastical circumscription, that is a territory subject to to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, the permission of this Congregation too must be obtained).

197. No less than seven sisters shall dwell at every city or town foundation.

198. Before making the foundation the Superior of the Society must visit the place to ascertain conditions of living and work.

199. Before making the foundation a written agreement should be made with the Ecclesiastical Superiors of the diocese for the provision of spiritual care as follows:— opportunity for daily Holy Mass; weekly confession ; a spiritual conference to the sisters every two weeks, if possible; a chapel in the house where the Blessed Sacrament may be reserved according to the prescriptions of Canon Law; exposition of the Blessed Sacrament once a week during Holy Hour, if possible.

CHAPTER XXII.
Of Local Superiors.

200. Local Superiors are appointed for three years by the Superior of the Society with the deliberative vote of her Council.

201. The local Superiors are appointed from among the sisters who have taken the perpetual Vows and are at least 30 years of age.

202. Subject to the lawful authority of the Superior of the Society, the local Superior is in immediate authority over the persons, funds and property under her care.

203.. She communicates regularly, at least once a month and if need be more often, with the Superior of the Society, keeping her accurately informed of the work, the religious discipline and all the affairs and happenings of the house.

204. The local Superior assigns various duties in the house. She shall preside at the religious and community exercises.

205. She shall see that the accounts be kept up to date and send every month a financial report to the Superior General.

206. She should not accept any new work which does not conform to our Constitutions.

207. She shall have her local council of two sisters appointed by the Superior General. The three will meet every month to confer on all important matters.

208. The Superior of each house should remember that she is first for the sisters and next for the work. Therefore, let all her dealings with her sisters be motherly, never discouraging them specially in failure. Let her take proper care of the old and the sick and of those who do not look after themselves. In the house work let her always be the first to devote herself. Let her have nothing special or different in food, clothes, or lodging; let her trust her sisters completely; let her be generous always, especially when the sisters observe poverty well. Let her house be a house of love, joy and peace.

CHAPTER XXIII.
Of the Mistress of Novices.

209. The Society, realising the importance of a sound religious training, shall always do

everything in its power to maintain a good noviciate.

210. The Novice Mistress must be at least 35 years of age and a professed for at least 10 years from the date of her first Profession.

211. The Mistress of novices is appointed by the Superior of the Society with the deliberative vote of her Council.

212. She is under the authority of the Superior of the Society to whom she shall send every six months a written report about each novice and postulant. These reports should be composed only after fervent prayers, to avoid exaggeration and keep to strictest impartiality.

213. The Mistress of novices should be a person of piety and good judgment and possessed of a good education. She should understand the spirit of the Society and be imbued with love for it. She should be an example of what she has to convey to the novices. She shall inspire them with personal love for God and His poor. She shall teach them the Constitutions and the exercises of piety. At times she shall be with them at their manual work to correct, guide and encourage.

214. Let the Mistress of novices train her young charges to total surrender in perfect cheerfulness and zeal for the salvation and sanctification of souls.

215. If due to the number of novices or for another reason it be deemed necessary, let the Novice Mistress be given an assistant or Socia who must be at least thirty years of age, five years professed and also endowed with all the qualities required for this office. In all that pertains to the noviciate she should be immediately under the Novice Mistress.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the other Charges in the House.

216. Let the councillors of each house be ready to help, advise, support their Superior. Let them be trustworthy and prudent and very sincere with her. Let the good of the Society be uppermost in their minds and hearts.

217. The sacristan shall keep an inventory of all the furniture of the chapel and sacristy and of all the linen. She shall see that the sacred vessels are all in order, that the Sacred Species be renewed in time. The corporals, palls and purificators she should wash after having obtained a general permission to do so. She should always have everything and every place in the chapel and sacristy spotlessly clean. Let her see that the lamp is burning bright.

218. The librarian should keep an inventory of all the books in the library. She should never without permission add books to the library, destroy, exchange, give or lend. She must take great care of the books, especially during the rainy season. With permission from the Superior, she shall collect simple books, magazines and papers to be distributed to the poor who can read or just look at the pictures.

219. The procuratrix shall keep a register of all receipts and expenditure, no matter how small, and shall account for them to the Superior. She shall have separate books

for (a) money received and spent; (b) names of benefactors, both spiritual and temporal, living and dead; (c) a register of all the inmates of the house.

220. She shall weekly balance her accounts and give the report to the Superior.

221. At the end of six months she shall give an account of her administration to the Superior and her councillors and present her books and accounts. If all be found correct the Superior shall sign.

222. Books and registers must be kept in such a way that they can be shown to the authorities at short notice.

223. In each house a sister secretary shall be appointed by the Superior and approved by the Superior of the Society to attend to official correspondence and keep the records of the house. The secretary may be the same sister as the procuratrix.

CHAPTER XXV.
Of the observance.

224. Each sister must have a copy of these Constitutions. She must understand the

spirit and the letter of them, and often refresh the memory of them. She shall read some of them during her spiritual reading going through them all by daily instalments from the first to the last.

225. Although the Constitutions by themselves do not bind under sin, the sisters out of love should never wilfully act against them, since they are the exposition of the duties of their state of life and the clear expression of God's Will. Unless a sister be faithful to them, she will neither accomplish the work that Divine Providence has assigned to her in this world nor will she attain to the degree of perfection to which God in His goodness has called her by giving her the religious vocation to this Society.

Laus Deo Mariaeque.